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STATE FOR OES/STC-KANE, OES/ENV, OES/PCI, NEA/ELA, NEA/RA
STATE PASS TO USAID
EPA FOR INTERNATIONAL

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [SENV](#) [KSCA](#) [EAID](#) [TSPL](#) [TPHY](#) [OTRA](#) [JO](#)
SUBJECT: EMBASSY AMMAN REQUEST FOR SCIENCE FELLOW

REF: STATE 28712

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1. (SBU) Summary: Post requests an Embassy Science Fellow from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to assist the Jordanian Ministry of Environment (MOE) with environmental remediation at the Russeifah landfill. The science fellow would build upon the work that former EPA science fellow Thabet Tolaymat undertook at the Russeifah landfill in 2006. Post requests science fellow assistance for approximately three months to help the MOE in developing a detailed implementation plan for the remediation work, as well as developing a request for proposal (RFP). USAID has dedicated \$500,000 as a standalone fund for the rehabilitation of the site. Post, the Greater Amman Municipality, and the Ministry of Environment consider this rehabilitation work and the request for a science fellow to be a high priority. This program would further enhance USG science diplomacy deliverables in the Muslim world. End Summary.

Russeifah Landfill Issues

2. (SBU) The city of Russeifah (population 350,000) lies 25 km northeast of Amman. Russeifah is subject to high dust and radiation levels, and an old phosphate mine and a recently closed municipal landfill lie within a residential area in the city. Key issues at the site include:

- Lack of enforcement action. Environmental regulations are written but not enforced;
- High levels of contaminated and potentially carcinogenic airborne particulate matter and fugitive dust generated from the phosphate ore and reject piles present at the site;
- Side slope stability of phosphate ore piles, which is a hazard to nearby traffic and residences. A heavy rain storm or a small ditch near these piles could lead to a slide and fatalities;
- Landfill gas odor problems and associated exposure to aromatic hydrocarbons;
- Illegal dumping of industrial liquid and solid wastes;
- Uncontrolled site access; and,
- Inadequate groundwater monitoring at the site, and lack of knowledge of potential groundwater contamination.

USAID Assistance: Past and Future

3. (U) USAID has previously assisted the MOE in Russeifah remediation through a June 2006 assessment by EPA science fellow Thabet Tolaymat from the National Risk Management Research Laboratory. Dr. Tolaymat's assessment study resulted in a comprehensive remediation/rehabilitation plan for addressing several solid and liquid wastes disposal issues at Russeifah mining area. These plans were well received by the MOE.

¶4. (SBU) USAID is seeking to build upon prior efforts and has committed initial funding of \$500,000 to kick-start remediation efforts in partnership with the MOE, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Greater Amman Municipality and the Phosphate Mining Company. USAID will engage other potential donors/lending agencies working in Jordan to explore supporting the remediation efforts, including through a public private sector partnership (PPP).

Scope of Work for Science Fellow

¶5. (U) The EPA specialist will work with the MOE and the Greater Amman Municipality on site remediation and clean up plan implementation. Specific action items would include:

- Further developing an action plan for site remediation and cleanup based on the 2006 site assessment report;
- Detailing and estimating the needed remediation activities in time and budget;
- Supporting the MOE in transitioning the recommendation of site assessment report into a Request for Proposal (RFP) for remediation work;
- Training staff at the Ministry of Environment and Amman municipality in site rehabilitation and clean up;
- Initiating the needed work and supervising the implementation progress (schedule permitting); and,
- Engaging the Greater Amman Municipality and the Phosphate Mines Company on the clean up actions.

Deliverables from Science Fellow Support

¶6. (U) Two key deliverables from the efforts of the Science Fellow would be:

- Developing an action plan and scope of work identifying timeframes, roles and responsibilities, costs and likely implementation schedule for the clean up of the site.
- Developing a request for proposal for the Russeifah mine/landfill site remediation to be issued by the MOE.

Science Fellow Skill-Sets

¶7. (SBU) Post has identified the following skill-sets which would ensure the maximum likelihood of success for the chosen science fellow. (Post believes that Dr. Tolayamat, if available, would be very successful as a returning science fellow).

- Academic degree in chemistry/environmental science;
- Ten years of experience in environmental field/site assessment and clean up; having specific experience in such phosphate mining sites, combined with solid waste landfill management issues will be helpful.
- Experience in developing RFPs;
- Experience in dealing with donor/funding authorities and agencies;
- Experience in coordinating and conducting training and/or knowledge transfers.
- Strong communication skills (knowledge of Arabic language would be advantageous for site workers who often have limited English skills);
- Experience in developing Arab countries;
- Exposure to the Jordanian environmental and regulatory context.

Logistics

¶8. (U) Embassy Amman is planning to use Embassy housing if available for the science fellow during her/his stay in Jordan for three months. In the event Embassy housing is not available, USAID will use alternate funding sources to support science fellow housing. Post will provide office space, computer/e-mail/Internet access, and cover in-country work-related travel costs from post resources. A security clearance is not required for the science fellow to support this request. The POC at post is Manu Bhalla, ESTH Hub Officer who can be reached at Bhallam@state.gov or by phone at +962-6-590-6621.

¶9. (SBU) The USG has a strong history of partnering with Jordan in

science diplomacy and associated programs. Engaging the Jordanian government through the science fellow support requested in this cable will further support USG efforts to cultivate genuine partnerships with the scientific and environmental communities in the Arab and Muslim worlds.

¶10. (SBU) This request has been cleared by Embassy Amman front office, USAID, ESTH Hub, the Management Section, and the RSO.

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<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/amman>

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